

FACTORS WHICH AFFECT THE SUCCESS IN ENGLISH TEACHING IN TURKEY. (THE EXAMPLE OF ERZURUM)

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ABSTRACT

This research has been done to find out the factors influencing the students' successes in learning a foreign language (English). In other words; the effects of the methods and techniques, used by the teachers on the staff to teach the chosen foreign language, on the students' success.

The main aim of this study to make the foreign language teaching in secondary and high schools more effective and make it suitable by reducing the educational expenses for ones who want to learn a foreign language but not having more money.

In this study it has been tried to answer some questions which are suitable for me to make brief comments on the problem defined by me.

We can order the questions like this:

1. What is the level of the suitability of the contents of the chosen course books to teach the foreign language and the goals of the second language learning?
2. What kind of learning activities do the teachers use in the course?
3. How do the aims meet the needs of the students?
4. What difficulties have the teachers faced while designing and preparing their course curriculums?

A reliable questionnaire prepared with the help of some experts and according to their point of views has been applied to the teachers in some secondary and high schools in Erzurum directed by the Ministry of Education to have the data related with the problem defined by me.

Key Words: Foreign Language Teaching, Language Teaching Materials, Teacher and Student Interactivity in Language Learning, Language Teaching in Turkey, Language Teaching From Past to Present Day in Turkey.

1. Introduction

This project consists of an evaluation of the factors that affect the success in English teaching processes as a second language.

This project consists of the affection of the methods used by the teachers to teach English as a second language in classroom activities.

The aim of our research is to provide more effective instruments to teach English better. In other words another aim of this project is to make English teaching processes more effective and economic in primary, secondary and high schools.

In this study, we have tried to find out the answers to the following questions:

- How close is the relationship between the aims of the subject and its contents?
- What kind of educational activities do the teachers use in the teaching courses?
- How do the aims meet the needs of the students?
- What difficulties have the teachers faced while implementing the course programme?

Questionnaire used to collect data for this research from the teachers at schools in Erzurum.

2. Research Questions

In this study, we have tried to find out:

- How close is the relationship between the aims of the subject and its contents?
- What kind of educational activities do the teachers use in the lessons?
- How do the aims meet the needs of the students?
- What difficulties have the teachers faced while implementing the course programme?

3. Topic

The factors which affect the success in English teaching in schools.

4. Participants

In this research, we applied the questionnaire to the fifteen teachers from different schools in Erzurum. There are eight different schools, two teachers from Anatolian Professional Girl High School, one teacher from Sabancı Primary School, one teacher from Şair Nefi Primary School, one teacher from Industry Profession High School, two teachers from İbrahim Hakkı Science High School, three teachers from Nevzat Karabağ Teacher Training High Schools and three teachers from Private Güneş Primary School.

5. Settings

In this study, we studied at eight schools of which names are written in participants. They are all in the city centre and they all have their own libraries and areas for sportive activities.

They all believe that their students have enough educational processes, facilities and abilities to learn English well and win the university entrance examination.

6. Literature Review

Classroom interaction is one of the most important educational activities and subjects of education and training. Language learning does not occur as a result of the transmission of facts about language or from a succession of rote memorization drills. It is the result of opportunities for meaningful interaction with others in the target language. Therefore, lecturing and recitation are not the most appropriate modes of language use in the second language classroom. Teachers need to move toward more richly interactive language use. Such as that found in instructional conversation. (Adger, C., Kalyanpur, M., Peterson, D., & Bridger, T., 1995, p.: 25 -55) And collaborative classroom work. (Adger C. Kalyanpur, M. Peterson, D. & Bridger, T., a.g.e., 1995, p.: 60 - 100)

According to Deci and Ryan (1985), intrinsic motivation is related to basic human needs. For competence, autonomy and relatedness. Intrinsically motivated activities are those that the learner engages in for their own sake because of their value, interest, and challenge. Such activities present the best possible opportunities for learning. (Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M., 1985, p.: 75)

Individuals vary greatly in the ways they learn a second language (Skehan, 1989). Some learners are more analytically oriented and thrive on picking apart words and sentences.

Others are more globally oriented, needing to experience overall patterns of language in meaningful contexts before making sense of the linguistic parts and forms. Some learners are more visually oriented, others geared to sounds. (Skehan, P., 1989, p.: 25 – 100)

Support from home is very important for successful second language learning. Some educators believe that parents of English language learners should speak only English at home. (Rodriguez, R., 1982, p.: 15 – 150)

Learners' goals may determine how they use the language being learned, how native-like their pronunciations will be, and how much energy they will expend to understand messages in the target language. Learners' goals can vary from wholly integrative the desire to assimilate and become a full member of the English-speaking world to primarily instrumental-oriented toward specific goals such as academic or professional success. (Gardner, H., 1989, p.: 10 – 75)

7. Methodology

We developed a questionnaire (opinion poll) to find out the factors that affect the success in teaching English process. Our questionnaire has 45 questions. Sample questions:

The backgrounds of students are important effects on success.

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Undecided
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly Disagree

We adapted the questionnaire into Turkish, because we wanted to make it clearer, so that we could have consistent data. We gave points, 5 to “**Strongly Agree**”, 4 to “**Agree**”, 3 to “**Un Decided**”, 2 to “**Disagree**” and 1 to “**Strongly Disagree**” to have right and accurate results. We classified the questions into three groups:

1. The effects of teachers' properties (28,29,33,34,36,40,41,43).
2. The effects of students' properties (35,38,39).
3. The effects of conditions on success (30,31,32,37,42,44)

8. Statistical results

| N | Minimum | Maximum | Meaning | Standart Level | Devotion |
|------|---------|---------|---------|----------------|----------|
| Q 1 | 15 | 1,00 | 5,00 | 2,8667 | 1,4075 |
| Q 2 | 15 | 1,00 | 5,00 | 3,5333 | 1,3558 |
| Q 3 | 15 | 1,00 | 5,00 | 3,3333 | 1,7995 |
| Q 4 | 15 | 1,00 | 4,00 | 2,2667 | ,8837 |
| Q 5 | 15 | 1,00 | 5,00 | 3,0667 | 1,3345 |
| Q 6 | 15 | 1,00 | 5,00 | 3,2000 | 1,5675 |
| Q 7 | 15 | 2,00 | 5,00 | 3,9333 | ,9612 |
| Q 8 | 15 | 1,00 | 5,00 | 2,8000 | 1,3732 |
| Q 9 | 15 | 1,00 | 5,00 | 4,2667 | 1,1629 |
| Q 10 | 15 | 4,00 | 5,00 | 4,8000 | ,4140 |
| Q 11 | 15 | 4,00 | 5,00 | 4,9333 | ,2582 |
| Q 12 | 15 | 2,00 | 5,00 | 4,5333 | ,8338 |
| Q 13 | 15 | 4,00 | 5,00 | 4,6667 | ,4880 |
| Q 14 | 15 | 1,00 | 5,00 | 3,8667 | 1,5523 |
| Q 15 | 15 | 3,00 | 5,00 | 4,4000 | ,7368 |
| Q 16 | 15 | 1,00 | 5,00 | 3,8000 | 1,3732 |
| Q 17 | 15 | 4,00 | 5,00 | 4,7333 | ,4577 |

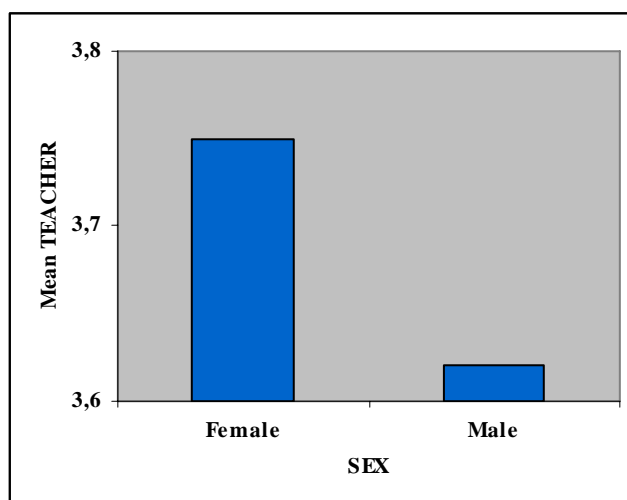
Questions; **1, 2, 6, 9, 13, 14, 16** are about the effects of teachers on success in English teaching. All of the teachers helped us by answering the questionnaire mostly agree with the idea that the teachers' properties are very important factors and have important effects on success in English teaching.

Questions; **8, 11, 12** are about the effects of students on the success in English teaching.

Questions; **3, 4, 5, 10, 15, 17** are about the effects of conditions. We can see from the table that teachers strongly agree with the idea that families or other conditions have a strong effect on success in English teaching.

9. The evaluation of graphs

Graph-1



In this graph, we can see that female teachers agree with the idea that the effects of teachers' properties are very important for the students to be successful in English language teaching processes and activities. Because their questionnaire answer is reaching to the **3, 8** and it nearly means **"Agree"**. But we have to say that some of the female teachers are still undecided. Because even their questionnaire answers reach to the point of **4** meaning **"Agree"** they are still round the point of **3** meaning **"Undecided"**. The male teachers are also undecided but their average point of answers of the questionnaire questions is **3, 6**, it is between **4** and **3, 5** but nearer the point of **4**. So we can say that all the teachers nearly aware of the importance of the teacher's properties about the success of the students in learning a foreign language as English.

According to the graph and the answers of the teachers for the questions of **1, 2, 6, 9, 13, 14, 16** of the questionnaire, we can say that the teachers' properties are one of the most important factors for students to be more successful in foreign language learning.

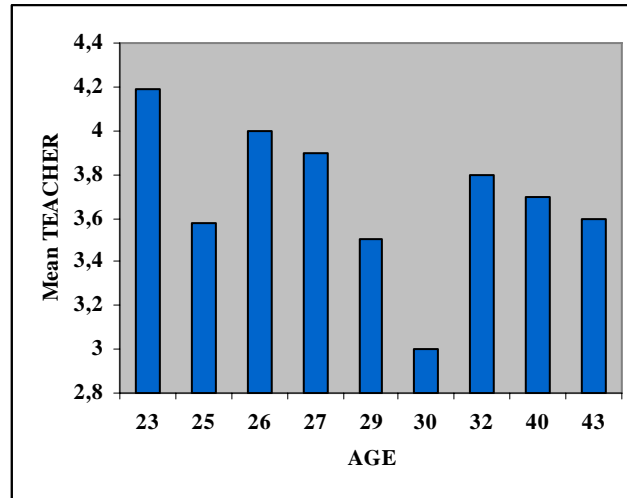
Reliability

Method 1 (space saver) will be used for this analysis.

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS – SCALE (ALPHA)

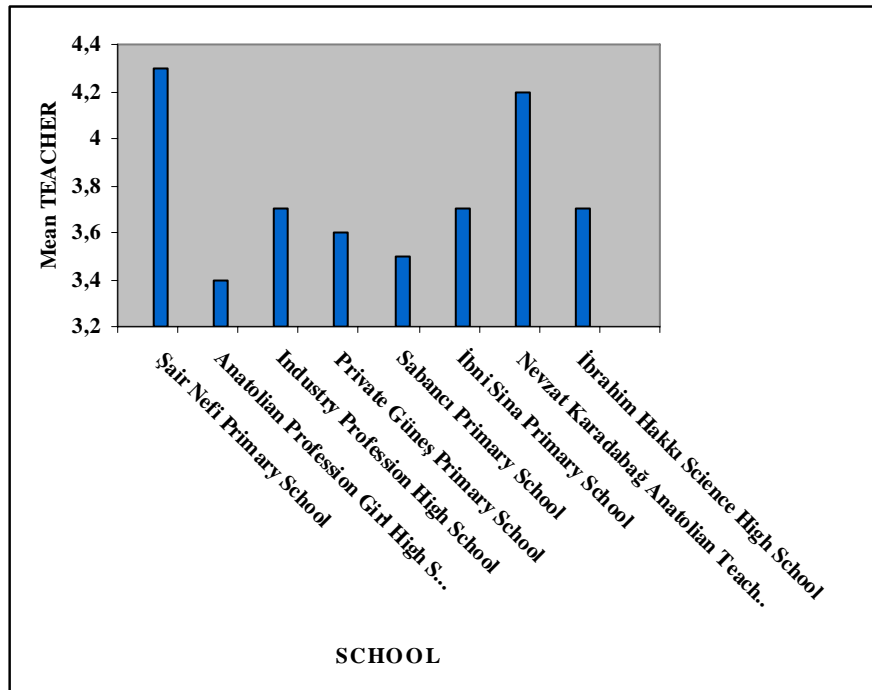
Reliability Coefficients: N of Cases=15, 0 / N of Items=17 / Alpha=, 6081

Graph-2



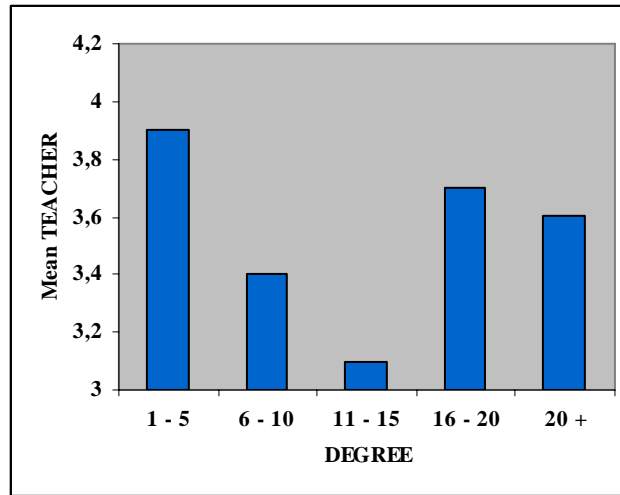
In this graph, it is understood that the teachers whose ages are **23** and **26** and **27** years old agree with the idea that the teachers' properties are also important factors to teach a foreign language better. Because the mean degrees of their answers of the questionnaire questions are **4** or nearly **4** and they mean "**Agree**". The teachers at the ages of **32**, **40**, **43**, **25** and **29** nearly agree that the teachers' properties are necessary and important factors to learn a foreign language well. Because the degrees of their questionnaire answers are over **3**, **5**. Maybe they agree with the idea that the teachers' properties are important factors for teachers to teach English well and for students to learn well. But the teachers at the age of **30** are undecided. Because they have chosen the questionnaire answer of "**Undecided**". Of course this result is really very interesting.

Graph-3



This graph shows that the teachers who work in Şair Nefi İlköğretim Okulu and Nevzat Karabağ Anatolian Teacher Training High School agree that the teachers' properties for teaching students a foreign language have very important effects on language learning processes, activities and experiences. Because they prefer the questionnaire answer of **"Agree"** and its point is **4, 0**. Industry Professional High School, Private Güneş Primary School, İbnisina Primary School and İbrahim Hakkı Science High School also agree with the idea that the teachers' properties are important and have positive effects on language learning success during the language learning processes, activities and experiences too. Because their questionnaire answers' degree points are between **3, 5** and **4, 0** and nearer the questionnaire answer of **"Agree"**. As a result of these data it can be said that these teachers are aware of the importance of teachers' properties before coming into the class. The teachers who are on duty in the other schools are undecided. Because they preferred the questionnaire answer of **"Undecided"**. They believe that if there aren't enough teachers in a school it is not possible for a teacher to prepare before coming into the class to teach the students a chosen foreign language better.

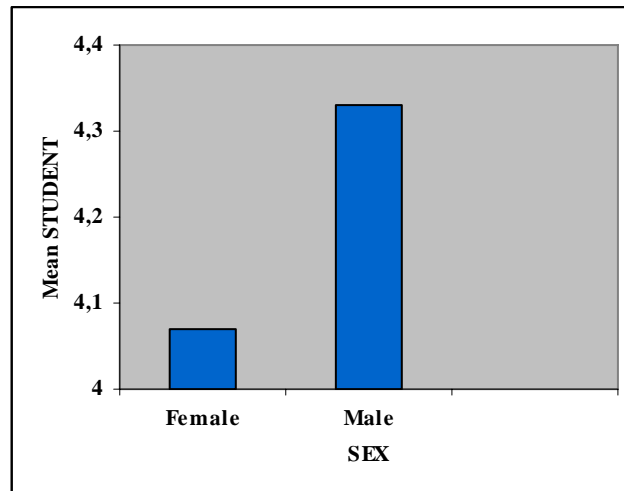
Graph-4



In this graph, the teachers who have the degrees between **1-5**, **16-20** and **20+** years agree that the teachers' properties before beginning to teach the students a foreign language are very important and have positive effects to teach the chosen foreign language better and successfully. Because their questionnaire answers' average degree points are over **3, 6** and it is nearer the questionnaire answer of **"Agree"**.

The teachers who have the degrees between **6-10** and **11-15** years are undecided. Because they prefer the questionnaire answer of **"Undecided"**. Because of the limitations we couldn't ask these questions to more teachers who have the same degrees.

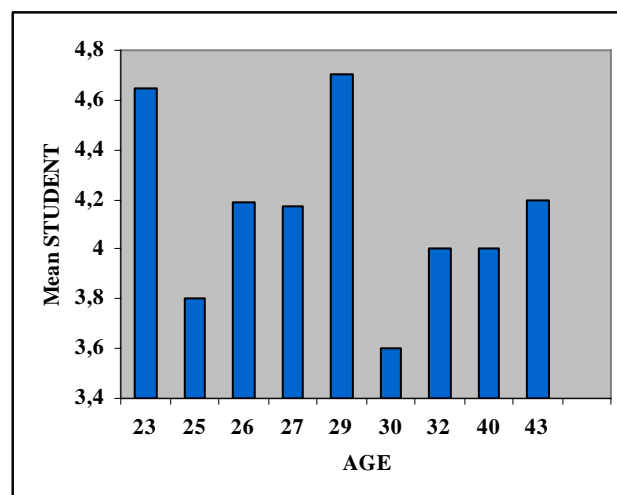
Graph-5



In this graph, both female and male teachers agree that the student's preparations and properties are very important and have a positive influence on student's successes when they try to learn a foreign language. Because all of the male and female teachers prefer the questionnaire answer of **"Agree"**. It is really known that pre-preparations are very important factors to motivate the students to be ready to learn a subject well. By means of pre-preparations the students have more time to spend for learning new subjects because of not spending more time to be motivated to learn well.

Local and known instruments are important teaching materials in education. And also teaching a foreign language by using local instruments and words known by the students well is more effective than using strange and foreign instruments as supportive language teaching materials. Pre-preparations are also similar to the local instruments for students to learn a foreign language. Because before they start to learn some subjects they have enough or some information to learn.

Graph-6

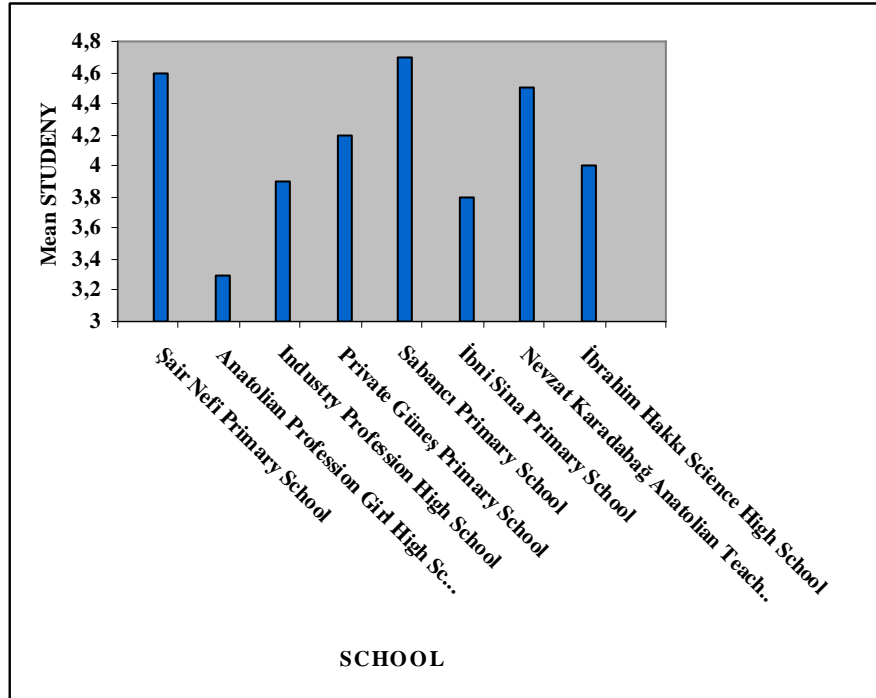


In this graph, the teachers who are at the ages of 23, 26, 27, 29, 32, 40, 43 commonly believe that the students' properties and preparations are having a very important and

positive influence on success of the students busy with learning a foreign language. Because they all prefer the questionnaire answer of “Agree”.

The teachers at the ages of **25** and **30** are a little undecided. Because the mean degrees of their preferences are under **4**. But on the other hand their mean degrees of preferences are over the degree of **3, 5**. So we can say that they agree with the idea that the students’ properties are important positive factors for them to be successful in foreign language learning too.

Graph-7

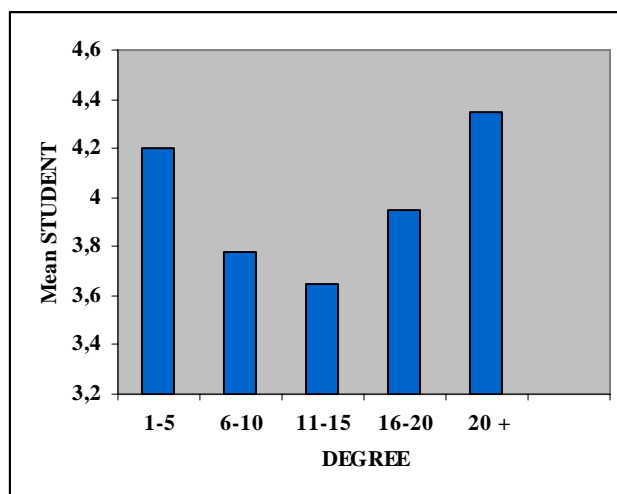


In this graph, the teachers from the Sabancı Primary School strongly agree with the idea that the students’ properties are very important factors for students to learn a foreign language well. Because the mean degree level of them is nearly reaching to the mean degree of **5** and over the mean degree of **4, 5**.

The teachers of Şair Nefi Primary School, Industry Professional High School, Private Güneş Primary School, İbni Sina Primary School and İbrahim Hakki Science High School agree with the same idea that the students’ preparations are important factors for students to be successful in foreign language learning. Because they have preferred the questionnaire answer of “Agree”.

Only the teachers from the Anatolian Professional Girl High School are undecided on that subject. Because they have preferred the questionnaire answer of “Undecided”. But maybe this situation is an exception. Nearly all of the teachers are aware of this subject.

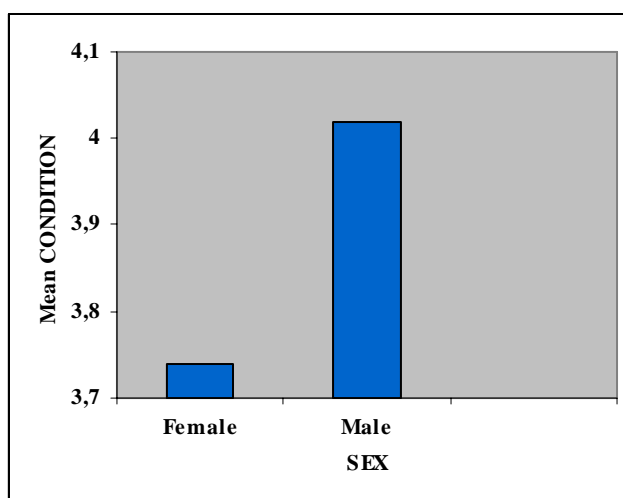
Graph-8



According to this graph we can say that all of the teachers agree with the idea that the students' preparations are very important factors to be more successful in foreign language teaching and learning activities.

Teachers between the degrees of **1-5**, **20+** and **16-20** have preferred the questionnaire answer of **“Agree”**. Because their questionnaire answers mean degrees are **4** and we know it means **“Agree”**. The other teachers' between the degrees of **6-10** and **11-15** mean degrees of questionnaire answers are between **3,5** and **4** but nearer the **4**. So they have the same idea that the students' preparations are important factors in learning a foreign language.

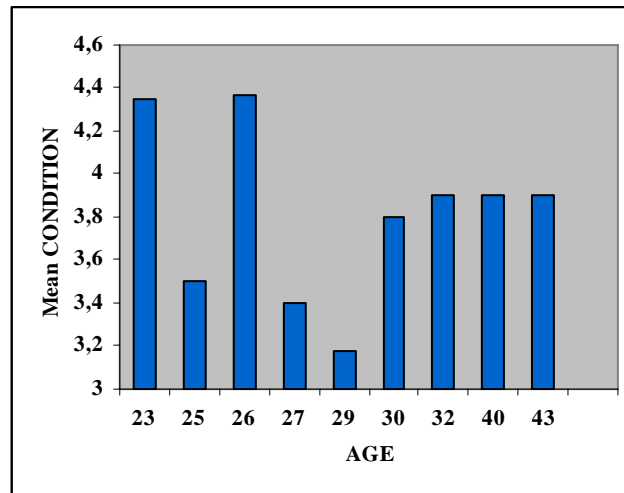
Graph-9



We can see in this graph that both female and male teachers agree with the idea that the effects of condition on success in English teaching are an important positive or negative factor. Because the male teachers' questionnaire answers' mean condition degree is **4** and it means **“Agree”**.

Female teachers' questionnaire answers' mean condition degree is between **3, 5** and **4** but it is nearer the degree of **4**. So it can be said that they agree with the same idea that the condition is an important positive or negative factors in English teaching process.

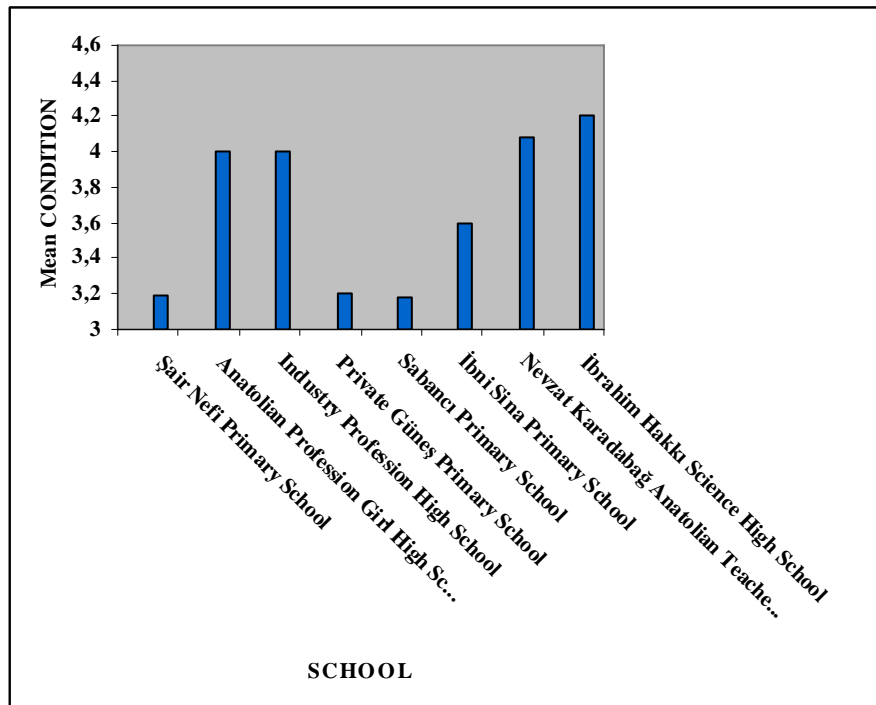
Graph-10



In this graph, the teachers who are **23, 25, 26, 30, 32, 40** and **43** years old agree with the idea that the effects of condition on success are a very important positive or negative factor in foreign language learning. Because the mean degrees of their questionnaire answers are **4** or over **3, 5**. These degrees mean **“Agree”**.

The teachers who are **27** and **29** years old are undecided. Because their questionnaire answers’ mean degrees are **3** or under **3, 5** and they mean **“Undecided”**. If so, it has been understood from the data of the graph the majority of the teachers are aware of the importance of condition in learning English.

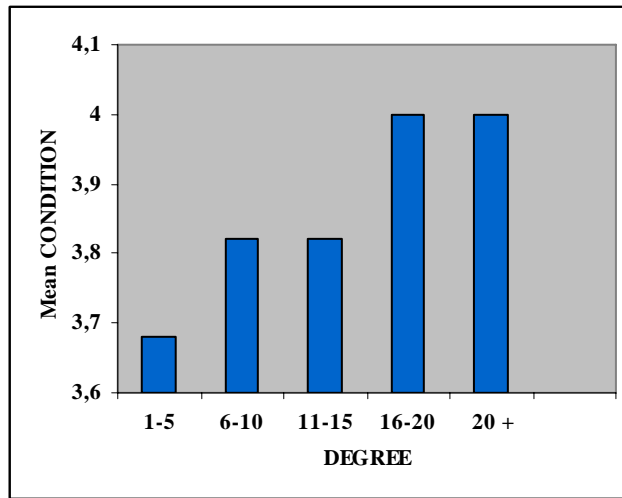
Graph-11



In this graph, we understand that the teachers who are on duty in Anatolian Professional Girl High School, Industry Professional High School, İbni Sina Primary High School, Nevzat Karabağ Anatolian Teacher Training High School and Ibrahim Hakkı Science School agree with the idea that the condition is a very important positive or negative factor in learning English as a foreign language. Because their questionnaire answers mean degrees are **4** or nearly **4**. We know that that means **“Agree”**.

The teachers from Şair Nefi Primary School, Private Güneş Primary School and Sabancı Primary School are undecided. Because their mean degrees of questionnaire answers are **3** or under **3,5**. These degrees mean **“Undecided”**.

Graph-12



It is very clear that in this graph, there is a good combination among teachers. Because all the teachers who have degrees between **1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20** and **20+** years agree with the idea that the condition (in other words it is the necessary instruments for educating and teaching students such as all activities, situations, duty persons, students' their own family positions, materials, schools' comfort, environment and so on) has an important effect on the success of learning a foreign language such as English. Because the teachers having the degrees of 16-20 and 20+ have chosen the questionnaire answer of **“Agree”**. This answer's mean degree point is **4**. The other teachers having the degrees of **1-5, 6-10, 11-15** years agree with the same idea too. Because their questionnaire answers' mean degree points are over **3,5** and nearer the point of **4**.

10. Conclusion

Most of the teachers to whom we presented the questionnaire to ask the definite questions to find out some important factors affecting the success of the students in learning a foreign language such as English. These factors are also the teachers' properties, the students' properties and the effects of other conditions.

In our questionnaire there are enough personal information questions about the teachers and some questions about the schools and their facilities supporting the educational activities.

The teachers impress by answering the questionnaire questions that they have enough materials and classes to teach the students English. But they inform that their schools don't have libraries in their classes.

Sixty percent of the teachers say that the hours of English lessons are enough.

Most of the teachers had some courses about language teaching and they said that the courses were not completely useful for them to teach English successfully.

All of the teachers make plans before coming into the class. But they say that they can not practice those plans very successfully.

Nearly all of the teachers believe that the unity of the school and family don't work very well. Of course this situation is one of the most important disadvantages in education.

Teachers generally think that the purposes and subjects that the teachers have to teach aren't very useful for the children's needs and necessities.

All of the teachers except one think that instructional activities can serve to the purposes of the lessons.

All of the teachers imply that they use **"question-answer"** teaching method to teach the students English as a second and foreign language. But some of the teachers imply that they partly use some other teaching methods. It must be known by the teachers that the teaching methods are definite to teach any subject. There mustn't be many differences on using the teaching methods.

All the teachers think that there must be equality between the course subjects and the students' levels.

By means of this study we find out that each teacher uses different kind of tests and questions to test the students.

According to our research and graphs the teachers believe that the teachers' properties are very important factors in foreign language teaching and learning processes. It is really true that all the teachers have to plan their teaching activities. Language learning is a vivid and systematic activity. All the learners need enough time processes to practice all the learned behaviours to direct the brain to solve the codes of the new language. Learned subjects are the most important instruments for a learner to understand and learn new instructions and subjects of the new language. So, this procedure must be planned before beginning to teach the students. All the teachers and students must know when to know the new subjects. The teachers have to know what and when to teach to teach before coming into the class. Of course there may be some new strategies produced in the class depending on the new positions and situations in the classroom. But they are some products of the planned subjects.

The teachers also think that students' lack of interest has an important role on success in language learning. Because the student's interest is the basic key to open the learning door. If there is a lack of interest all the activities are useless.

All the teachers agree with the idea that the effects of conditions have a very strong role on success in English teaching. Because condition is a very large and wide subject. All of the learning and teaching materials and instruments are in it. School, teacher, student, manager, all the other duty persons, family, school facilities and so on. For that reason the condition of all these instruments is very important to succeed to teach the students a foreign language well.

According to the data, conditions should be organized to have a good and successful teaching and learning atmosphere in schools. Teachers should have properties to teach English and they should have some degrees and experiences. Students should be grown in a good family atmosphere and they should be very interested in the courses and lessons.

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